

Along with his work in the State assembly, Keith builds upon his dedication to his community by being an active participant in community service organizations. Keith's community involvement includes the Elks, Summit Hill Fire Company, Knights of Columbus, Ancient Order of Hibernians, Pennsylvania Emergency Management Council, and his work as past president of the Panther Valley Irish American Association.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to join with the community, his friends and family in paying tribute to an exemplary legislator and public servant. I congratulate the Panther Valley Irish American Association on its 50th year, for the work they do in the community, and for their outstanding choice for this year's Shamrock Award.

A TRIBUTE TO KEVIN "CASEY" GENTHER

HON. JERRY LEWIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 17, 1997

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to your attention the fine work and outstanding public service of Kevin "Casey" Genther, the commander of American Legion Rim of the World Post No. 360. Casey will be relinquishing his position in July after 2 years of remarkable service to our community.

Casey has played an instrumental role in the growth and success of American Legion Post No. 360 since he assumed his position upon the resignation of the previous commander.

In that time, the enrollment of new members has increased by 20 percent. Casey has also been the driving force in getting Rim of the World Post No. 360 to participate in the activities of the Mountain Thrift Shoppe, a nonprofit resale store that benefits nine charitable and service organizations in our mountain community. In addition, donations and grants to local organizations in need of financial support have increased fivefold during his tenure in office.

Casey has also made a major contribution to local educational efforts and the lives of young people in our community. Scholarship funding for local high school graduates has increased from \$350 to \$4,000. Educational incentive grants for graduates of the local continuing education school have risen considerably. In addition, Casey has formalized the annual American Legion National High School Oratorical Contest. He has also overseen a 100-percent increase in attendance at Boy's State and Girl's State by local high school juniors. Since Casey assumed his leadership position, Post No. 360 has sent eight local teachers to teaching workshops at the Freedom Foundation in Valley Forge, PA.

Mr. Speaker, Casey Genther has made a remarkable difference in the lives of many people through his leadership of the American Legion Rim of the World Post No. 360. His many contributions toward the betterment of Post No. 360, local education, and our community is certainly worthy of our appreciation and recognition. It is only appropriate that the House recognize Commander Genther today.

IN THE SPIRIT OF ST. PATRICK'S DAY

HON. JAMES T. WALSH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 17, 1997

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, in the spirit of St. Patrick's Day, I am inviting all my colleagues to become a Friend of Ireland. The Friends of Ireland is a bipartisan congressional organization established in 1981 by the late Speaker, Thomas "Tip" O'Neill. Every successive Speaker has carried on the tradition and my appointment as chairman by Speaker GINGRICH is a clear demonstration of the bipartisan nature of the Friends. The Speaker and Minority Leader GEPHARDT serve as honorary chairmen of the group.

The purpose of the Friends of Ireland is to increase the bonds of friendship and understanding between the American people and the people of Ireland. We look for a peaceful solution to the problems of this troubled land. Our organization is open to all members of the 105th Congress who share its principles and has attracted widespread support over the years. There are also several Senators who are members of the Friends.

Over the years, the statements of support for peace in Ireland, condemnations of human rights abuses, assistance to the International Fund for Ireland, and general expressions of goodwill have made a difference. The voice of the United States Congress is listened to very attentively in Ireland both in the Republic and in the North.

I would like to share with you this year's St. Patrick's Day statement:

STATEMENT BY THE FRIENDS OF IRELAND, ST. PATRICK'S DAY 1997

On this St. Patrick's Day, we the Friends of Ireland renew our call for the IRA to restore its cease-fire, which should be followed by Sinn Fein's immediate entry into the Northern Ireland all-party peace talks when they resume in June.

The Friends of Ireland commend our former colleague, Senator George Mitchell, for his outstanding service as chairman of the talks. The talks offer an historic opportunity to address the three key relationships which must underpin any settlement—those within Northern Ireland, between North and South, and between Ireland and Britain. We fully support this process, and recognize that there is much greater likelihood for success if all parties with an electoral mandate, including Sinn Fein, participate in the talks. Sinn Fein's participation in the talks, however, is properly conditional on the unequivocal restoration of the cease-fire by the IRA.

We also recognize that the IRA maintained a cease-fire for 17 months, from September 1994 to February 1996. It is of deepest concern that, during that long and hopeful period, additional obstacles were laid in the way of bringing all parties to the table. We hope that a renewed IRA cease-fire will on this occasion be met with an appropriate response by the British Government, including the taking of necessary confidence-building measures.

Basic issues of equal justice and human rights are at the heart of the conflict in Northern Ireland and they must be central to any realistic resolution of the conflict. Peace without justice is not sustainable. It is only likely to flourish when all sides feel that their basic rights are respected and pro-

tected. Accordingly, we urge prompt action to remedy outstanding miscarriages of justice such as the Casement and Latimer cases. In light of the compelling new evidence surrounding Bloody Sunday, we add our voice to the calls for a new inquiry into this tragedy.

We are also concerned by the deteriorating conditions under which Republican prisoners are being held in Britain and in particular the treatment of Roisin McAliskey. It is essential, in negotiating a new political framework for Northern Ireland, that respect for human rights be guaranteed. The creation of a Bill of Rights, and a police service with the confidence of the whole community, are essential to ensure the protection of the rights of all and to lay a solid foundation for a lasting peace.

We strongly oppose the continued and increased punishment beatings by paramilitaries in both communities. Such atrocities have no place in society, and we call for an immediate end to these attacks.

It is essential that there be no repeat of the deplorable events during last year's marching season. The RUC behavior at Drumcree further eroded the confidence of the Catholic community in fairness of the police force. As the State Department's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices recently noted: "Many observers on both sides of the community perceived the Government's reversal in the face of unlawful Unionist protests as a victory of might over the rule of law, and the incident damaged the RUC's reputation as a impartial police force."

We therefore strongly endorse the recommendations in the North Report that an independent parades commission be given full decision-making powers to deal effectively with controversial parades. We are concerned at the British Government's decision to delay implementation of significant sections of the report, which in our view must be in place in advance of this year's marching season.

The Friends of Ireland welcome the strong commitment of President Clinton and the Congress to the success of the peace process in Northern Ireland, and the transformation in the situation which all have helped bring about. We are confident that the United States will continue to play a constructive role in encouraging an early and peaceful resolution of the conflict for the benefit of all of the people of Northern Ireland.

FRIENDS OF IRELAND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Edward M. Kennedy, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Christopher J. Dodd, Newt Gingrich, Richard A. Gephardt, and James T. Walsh.

TRIBUTE TO DICK LANGE

HON. DAVID E. BONIOR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 17, 1997

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to pay tribute to Dick Lange as he retires from the Macomb Intermediate School District. His friends and colleagues will host a party in his honor at Partridge Creek Golf Course.

Education has always been central in Dick's life. His hard work in school was rewarded when he was honored with a 4-year Ford scholarship to the University of Michigan. While at U. of M., Dick was extremely active in intramural sports. His experience and success as a student gave him the insight he would later need as a teacher, administrator, and educational leader.